the hope that both the Governments will act in concert in their own interest and not object to the schemes of one another especially those involving drinking water supply in view of the fact that as they are expected to the operated within their allocated share. He further mentioned in the meeting that if the Govt, of Tamil Nadu will withdraw its objections, the Govt, of Karnataka will abide by the conditions laid down in the letter of concurrence issued by the Ministry and it will facilitate clearance of the Hogenakkal Water Supply Scheme of Tamil Nadu.

Thereafter, the clearance of MoWR for utilisation of 1.4 TMC of Cauvery water for the Hongenakkal Water Supply and Sanitation Project subject to certain conditions was conveyed to the Govt, of Tamil Nadu *vide* letter dated 21.9.1998, the copy of which was also sent to the Govt, of Karnataka.

Deterioration of water quality in Punjab

3849. SHRI NARESH GUJRAL: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

whether Government is aware that the water table in Punjab is dwindling rapidly and water quality has deteriorated due to excessive use of fertilizers for paddy/wheat cycle;

whether Punjab Government requested for assistance from the Centre to repair its canal system, which needs immediate attention; and

if so, whether the Central Government is planning to extend some assistance to ensure that food production in the State does not suffer?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAY PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV): (a) Yes Sir. The water table in Punjab is dwindling rapidly. As per the latest ground water resource assessment carried out jointly by Punjab State and Central Ground Water Board (as on 2004), out of 137 blocks in the State, 103 blocks have been categorized as over-exploited where the annual ground water extraction exceeds the annual availability of ground water resources and significant decline in long term ground water level trend has been observed.

Higher values of Nitrate concentration have been reported from isolated patches in some of the districts of Punjab. A study carried out during 2007-2008 in district of Jalandhar could not establish the effect of use of fertilizer in agriculture on ground water quality. The observations of the study were based on the concentrations of Nitrate and Potassium.

(b) and (c) The Government of Punjab has requested in February 2008 for arranging one time financial assistance of Rs. 950 crores for anti-water logging measures in Muktsar, Ferozpur and Faridkot districts of Punjab which *inter-alia* include the relining of Rajasthan Feeder Canal and Sirhind Feeder Canal. The Government of Punjab has been advised to prepare a Detailed Project Report for these measures and submit it to the Central Water Commission (CWC) for techno-economic appraisal and for further submission to the Advisory Committee for Irrigation, Flood Control & Multipurpose Projects under Ministry of Water Resources for approval and the investment clearance from Planning Commission so that the project could be considered for central funding. So far no project report from the State Government has been received.